

Rattaman's Journal.

BY S. J. ROW.

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OUR GUARDIAN SPIRITS.

Linger, gentle angel spirit;
Stay and fold thy cherub wings;
To the world thou didst inherit,
Whatsweet message dost thou bring?
Erst of a balm for her who bore thee,
Went thy early flight to heaven;
Saw the cold clouds levelled o'er thee,
Canst bestow the healing heaven?

As we tarry near the green sward
Covering to thy mortal bed;
And gaze down upon the roses,
All in bloom above thy head;
Sadly, mildly, merrily whispers
Of a bud that never bloomed;
Then we feel a presence near us,
Pointing to our rose bud's tomb.

Guardian spirit, hovering o'er us,
Of thy presence seemeth near;
And when sorrow's fount o'erfloweth,
Unseen plians dry each tear;
When the silent twilight brings
Bitter memories to the heart,
Back to earth our cherub wingeth,
Whispers peace, and steals the dart!

THE MAIDEN AND THE EMPRESS.

There was once a poor man who dwelt in a hut, and gained a livelihood by begging alms. He had an only daughter, whom heaven had gifted with extraordinary wisdom, and who, little by little, taught her father to speak so wisely, that one day, when he had gone to ask alms of the Emperor, the latter was astonished at the wisdom with which he spoke, and despatched from whom he acquired it. "From my daughter, O noble Emperor!" answered the poor man; and the Emperor, being very wise himself, and proud of his wisdom, resolved to put that of the old man's daughter to trial; so he gave the old man thirty eggs, and said:

"Take these to thy daughter, and bid her get them hatched into thirty pullets. If she refuses to obey, evil will befall her."

The poor man burst into tears, for he saw that the eggs had all been boiled. But when he had reached home, and had told his daughter all that had passed, she bade him be cheerful and retire to rest, telling him he need not fear any danger. She then took a pot of water, put a handful of beans into it, and placed it over the fire; and on the morrow, when her father had risen, she gave him the boiled beans, and told him to dig a trench in a certain field, by which the Emperor would pass as he went out hunting. "And as the Emperor passes by, take the beans and sow them in the trench, and cry aloud, 'God be gracious, and grant that my boiled beans may spring up quickly!'"

The poor man did as his daughter had instructed him. He took his spade and dug a trench in a field by the side of the highway, and when he saw the Emperor coming, he began to sow his beans in a trench and cry aloud, "God be gracious, and grant that my boiled beans may spring up quickly!"

When the Emperor heard these words, he stopped, and asked how it was possible for boiled beans to grow? Whereupon the poor man answered:

"Gracious Emperor, it is as easy as for a pullet to be hatched from a boiled egg."

The Emperor divined who it was that had arranged this stratagem, and in order still more to try the maiden's wisdom, he gave the poor man a pack of hemp, and said:

"Take this to thy daughter, and bid her make me from it as many sails and ropes as are necessary for a ship. If she refuses to obey her head shall pay the forfeit."

The poor man was sorely troubled at these words, and having received the pack of hemp, returned to his daughter, weeping all the way.

But when he had told her all that had passed, she again comforted him, and bade him be cheerful and retire to rest, and fear no danger; and on the morrow when he had risen, she gave him a little piece of wood and said:

"Take this to the Emperor, and say that if he will cut me out a spinning wheel, a loom, and a shuttle, then will I do that which he has commanded."

The poor man did the second time as his daughter had instructed him; and when he had delivered her message, the Emperor was more than ever astonished at her wisdom. To put it to a new trial, he took a drinking glass, and said to the poor man:

"Take this to thy daughter, and bid her empty the sea with it, and make its bed dry enough to grow corn on. If she refuses to obey, both her head and thine own shall pay the forfeit."

At this the poor man was more terrified than ever. But when he had returned home and told his daughter what the Emperor had commanded, the maiden comforted him the third time and bade him be cheerful, retire to rest, and fear no danger. And on the morrow, when he had risen, she gave him a pound of tow, and said to him:

"Take this to the Emperor and say that if he will stop with it the mouths and the springs of all the rivers in the world, then will I do that which he has commanded."

Again the man did according to his daughter's counsel; and when he had delivered her message, the Emperor acknowledged that she was wiser than he himself, and commanded that she should at once be brought before him. When she had come into his presence, and had saluted him, he said to her:

"My daughter, tell me what can be heard

the furthest?" and she answered, "Gracious Emperor, thunder and a lie."

The Emperor then took his beard in his hand, and demanded of his counsellors how much it was worth. When they had placed upon it a value, some greater and some less, the maiden said:

"Most gracious Emperor, none of thy counsellors have answered well. The board of the Emperor is worth three showers of rain in a dry summer."

These words delighted the Emperor, who declared that the maiden had answered better than all his counsellors. He then asked her if she would become his wife, saying that he would receive only one answer. The maiden prostrated herself before him and replied:

"Gracious Emperor, it is thine to command, and mine to obey what thou commandest. Let me ask of thee but one thing, namely, that thou shalt give me a writing, written with thine own hand, that it should ever be thy pleasure to send me away, I may carry from thy castle whatever single thing I may love best."

The Emperor gave her the writing that she asked, and then had her placed upon the throne beside him.

For many summers the Empress was loved by her husband; but it came to pass in time that she ceased to cherish her. He then said to her one day, "I do not wish thee any longer to be my wife. Leave my castle, and go wherever thou wilt."

She answered, "Illustrious Emperor, I will obey thee. Grant me only that I may stay until to-morrow."

The Emperor granted what she asked, and in the evening she poured some of the juice of a certain herb into a cup of wine, and presented it to him, and said:

"Drink, illustrious Emperor, and be happy! To-morrow I go away, and to-morrow I shall be more joyful than I was even on my marriage morn."

The Emperor drank, and soon his eyelids became heavy, and he fell asleep; while he slept, the Empress had him lifted into a carriage which was in readiness, and therein conveyed to a distant grotto, which she long ago had prepared in anticipation of such an emergency. When the Emperor awoke, and found himself in the grotto, he angrily demanded how he had come thither. "I have had you brought here," replied the Empress. And he then asked, very angrily, wherefore she had done this, adding: "Did I not say that I should no longer be thy wife?" The Empress took out of her bosom the writing which the Emperor had given her before her marriage, and answered:

"It is true, illustrious Emperor; but this writing, which was given by thine own hand, accorded me the right to bring away with me, when I quitted the castle, whatsoever I might love best; I exercised my right, and brought thee, most gracious Emperor."

When the Emperor heard these words, he vowed never to part from so faithful and wise a wife. So he embraced her, and returned with her to the castle; and they two sat thereafter side by side upon the throne, for many summers; and when the last summer had passed, death reaped them both together, like a double ear of corn.

LARGE DEPOSIT OF HONEY.

A somewhat singular discovery was made in a house of St. Louis. An exchange gives the following account of the story:

The inmates of one of our largest uptown mansion houses, a few days since were surprised to find a large number of bees flying about in two of the upper rooms. As the little fellows continued to occupy the places a bee naturalist was sent for to investigate.

On entering the rooms he exclaimed: "You have honey somewhere here," and proceeded to search for it. On removing the fire-board, he discovered that one flue of the chimney was full of honey comb, which was hanging down into the fire place, and the honey dripping from it; proceeding to the top of the house to sound the chimney, he found it the same; one flue of the chimney was full, and the bees were industriously at work there also. These flues of the chimney had never been used; they were plastered smooth in the inside, and were perfectly dark, a stone having been placed on the top of each flue. The bees had descended the adjoining flues, and found small holes about ten inches from the top of the chimney, leading into the closed flues, and through these holes they made their way in and out. They have, as is supposed, occupied these places for three years, having been kept warm in the winter by the heat from the adjoining flues. On removing the fire-board, the bees, seeing the great light which had broken in upon them, descended into the room and gathered on the windows, until they were covered to the thickness of three inches. It is estimated that there are in the two flues from 40,000 to 50,000 bees, and from 2,000 to 3,000 pounds of honey.

RIVER OF VINEGAR.—Near the road from Bogota to Quitor, in South America, there is a river the waters of which are as sour as vinegar. It takes its rising among the Andes in the neighborhood of the volcanoes, which are supposed to impart to it sulphuric properties.

What is taken from you before you get it? Your portrait.

A SINGULAR INCIDENT.

A correspondent writing from the Ninth Army Corps, opposite Fredericksburg, narrates the following, which occurred on Christmas day, while the writer was out on picket with his Company:

After partaking of a Christmas dinner of salt-junk and hard tack, our attention was attracted by a rebel picket who hailed us from the opposite side of the river:

"I say, Yank, if a fellow goes over there will you let him come back again?"

Receiving an affirmative answer, he proceeded to test the truth of it by paddling himself across the river. He was decidedly the cleanest specimen of a rebel I had seen. In answer to a question, he said he belonged to the Georgia Legion. One of our boys remarked, "I met quite a number of your boys at South Mountain." Yes, I suppose so—if you were there," said the rebel, while his face grew very sad. "We left very many of our boys there. My brother, poor Will, was killed there. It was a very hot place for a while, and we had to leave it in a hurry. That's so, Georgia, your fellows fought well there, and had all the advantage, but the old Keystone boys were pressing you hard. By the way I have a likeness here (taking it out of his pocket) that I picked up on the battle-field the next morning, and I have carried it ever since." He handed it to the rebel, who, on looking at it, pressed it to his lips, exclaiming, "my mother! my mother!" He exhibited considerable emotion at the recovery of the picture, but on regaining his composure he said, that his brother had it in his possession, and must have lost it in the fight. He then asked the name of the one to whom he was indebted for the lost likeness of his mother, remarking, "There may be better times soon, and we may know each other better." He had taken from his pocket a small pocket bible, in which to write the address, when Alex—who had taken no part in the conversation, fairly yelled, "I know that! I lost it at Bull Run!" "That's where I got it, Mr. Yank," said the rebel—and he handed it to Alex. "I am much obliged to you, Georgia Legion, for I wouldn't part with it for all the Southern Confederacy." I was a little curious to know something further of the book, so I asked Alex, to let me see it. He passed it to me. I opened it, and on the fly leaf saw written in a neat lady's hand—"My Christmas Gift, to—December 25th, 1860. Ella." "Well Alex," said I, "it is not often one has the same gift presented to him a second time." "True, Captain; and if I could but see the giver of that to-day, there's but one other gift I would want." "What's that, Alex?" "This rebellion played out, and my discharge in my pocket."

The boys had all been busily talking to our rebel friend, who, seeing a horseman approaching in the direction of his post, bade us a hasty good-bye, and made as quick a trip as possible across the Rappahannock. Night came on, and those not on duty lay down on the frozen ground to dream of other Christmas nights when we knew not war.

YANKEE STAGE-DRIVER.—The obliging disposition of the Yankee stage-driver is aptly illustrated in the following bit of satire.—As Mr. J.—, the driver, was proceeding from Boston, not long since, a woman called him to take a bedstead on the top without unloading it. He told her he would oblige her the next time he came along, but he could not then, as he had engaged to take on a wind-mill a little ways ahead; and as he had a large cradle on the top at the time, he was afraid he should not have room. Proceeding a little further, he was requested by a woman to wait till she had finished her washing and ironing. He told her he often had to wait for the women to do their ironing, but he could not stand washing and ironing both!

WOMEN AND CHILDREN CHEWING TOBACCO.—A Missouri letter in the Debuque Times says tobacco is used among the natives in the rural districts indiscriminately by both sexes, children as well as adults, both for chewing and smoking. A foraging party near Hartsville recently called at a house where they found a woman and thirteen children, the three oldest being girls, and all "chewing" a "power" of tobacco. One of the party remarking that she was the first woman he ever saw chew tobacco, the old woman exclaimed, "Wal now, what was you brought up? Never seen a woman chew 'bacar! Guess you haint been round much. Don't you have all ladies what you was raised?"

TO THE GIRLS.—An exchange in giving an advice to young ladies on the subject of matrimony: "Never marry a fellow who is ashamed to carry a small bundle; who lies in bed until breakfast, and until his father has opened his shop, store or office, and swept it out; who frequents taverns, bowling saloons, prize fights, &c.; who owes his tailor, shoemaker, washer woman, jeweler, barber, printer, and landlady, and never pays his debts—who is always talking about his acquaintances, and condemning them; whose tongue is always running about nonsense, who thinks he is the greatest man in the neighborhood, and yet who every one despises and shuns." This is good advice girls; see that you don't overlook it.

AN IMPORTANT ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

The Richmond Examiner of the 20th has a remarkable editorial, in which it makes the following singular admissions:

"It is not altogether an empty boast on the part of the Yankees—that they hold all they ever held, and that another year of such progress as they have already made will find them masters of the Southern Confederacy. They who think independence is to be achieved by brilliant but inconsequential victories, would do well to look with the natural eye at the magnitude of Yankee possessions in our country. Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri are claimed as constituent parts of the confederation. They are as much in the power of Lincoln as Maine and Minnesota. The pledge, once deemed foolish by the South, that he would 'hold, occupy, and possess' all the forts belonging to the United States Government, has been redeemed almost to the letter by Lincoln. Forts Sumpter and Morgan we still retain, but with those exceptions, all the strongholds on the seaboard, from Fortress Monroe to the Rio Grande, are in the hands of the enemy."

"Very comforting and very easy to say that it was impossible to prevent all this, and the occupation of the outer edge of the Republic amounts to nothing. Drewry's Bluff and Vicksburg give the lie to the first assertion, and the onward movement of Rosecrans towards Alabama, the presence of Grant in North Mississippi, and of Curtis in Middle Arkansas, say nothing of Banks at New Orleans and Baton Rouge, set at rest the silly dream that a thin strip of sea-coast only is in the possession of our foes. The truth is, the Yankees are in the very heart of the Confederacy; they swarm on all our borders; they threaten every important city yet belonging to us, and nearly two hundred thousand of them are within two days' march of the Confederate capital. This is no fiction. It is a fact so positive that none can deny it."

"Nor is this all. The President tells us, in his message, that the troubles with the Indian tribes have been removed, and no further difficulty is anticipated. The intelligence we obtain from private and trustworthy sources does not confirm the President's sanguine assertions."

The Examiner goes on to say that the condition of affairs is "distressing" for the Confederates; that New Mexico and Arizona are, for the time being, lost to them, and that "the state of disaffection in Tennessee and Mississippi (growing out of the appointment of incompetent officers and the fancied neglect of that country by the Confederate Government—not from any lack of fervor in the cause), which President Davis' visit was intended to heal, is likely to revive under the depressing influence of Bragg's retreat and his continuance in command—all all this to the foregoing, and it will be seen that the Yankees have much to encourage them in the prosecution of the war, and we not a little to excite serious apprehensions as to the future."

The Examiner concludes its jeremiad by urging the further enforcement of the conscription, and says: "If within the next two months we do not add seventy-five or a hundred thousand men to our forces in the South West we shall come to grief."

THE RED INDIANS OF AMERICA.—We have often thought of the death of Mah-lo-tah-pe, (the four bears), who recovered from the disease, and sat in his wigwam, and saw his whole tribe and family die around him, then covered them with rushes, and went to the hill determined to starve himself to death, remained there six days, crept back to the gloom of his wigwam, laid down by the side of his dead, and died after nine days' abstinence from food. The red man regards the white as an essential and undoubted liar; probably, we may hope, not only because he has tested the veracity of his white brother and found it wanting, but because almost every thing communicated must be opposed to his wall of fixed ideas. But he possesses an instinctive grace and grandeur of soul. What a pretty story is that which Catlin tells of the Pawnee, who rescued the poor girl of some hostile tribe from the stake, to whom some ladies of New York sent the medal with the letter: "Brother, accept this token of our esteem; always wear it for our sakes, and when you have the power to save a poor woman, think of this and us, and try to her relief!" and the answer, so thoroughly Red Indian: "Sisters, this will give me care more than ever I had, and I will listen to white men. I am glad I heard of the good act I have done. I did it in ignorance; now I know what I have done. I did it in ignorance, and did not know I did good, but by giving me this medal I know it!" How great is that instinctive grandeur of soul which does good and yet does not know it! We quite agree with Dr. Wilson that the red man is one of our greatest ethnological mysteries. Did he come from Europe? Has he, too, Norse blood in his veins?—*Electric Review.*

AN IMPUTATION.—An officer of a Maine regiment, observing a soldier industriously scratching himself, said to him: "What's the matter, my man—fleas?" "Fleas!" said he in a tone of scorn, "do you think I am a dog? No, sir, there is lice!"

Second thoughts are best; man was God's first thought; woman his second.

Battaman's Journal.

ARMY CORRESPONDENCE.

The following letter was sent to us with a request to publish it.

FALMOUTH, Va., December 26, 1862.

DEAR WIFE.—As I have not heard from you for some time, I concluded I would drop you a few lines to let you know that I am yet among the living. Thank God for the privilege. Well, this is a business town, and has been very lively for the past few days, as some of the sutlers have got an article, commonly called whisky, on sale; and some of the boys have been imbibing too freely,—consequently, they feel like having a "gay and happy" time. Our Regiment is doing Provost duty now, and we have to arrest all that get a "brick" in their caps. None of our men are in the "mix." I have become a regular temperance lecturer. I have not been "rich" for a long, long time. Our Captain that was, was here to day for his brother, our Orderly Sergeant, who was killed in the late battle. He can not get his remains, as he was buried on the other side of the river. He is going home to-morrow.

I don't know any war news, and not to give you a short answer, don't care a cent which way they move, or if they move at all. I have run my chance a good many times, and can do it again; and will until my time comes. If it must be that I loose my life in this war for the restoration of our glorious Union, I am perfectly willing; for I can loose it in no better cause, or more lasting benefit to posterity. The loss of my life is but as a drop in the bucket.

Wm. D. is telling camp-fire "yarns." He is in good spirits, and all the boys are coming up to their usual degree of humor, glowing spirits, and good feeling. I don't see how it comes, that our convalesces never come back after they get entirely well. Our company would not look so slim, if we could get our men back when they are fit for duty—those that are sent to the hospital, and the paroled prisoners, who have long since been regularly exchanged. But none of them come. The first thing we hear of them, they are at home. You must have a home guard of "convalesces" and "paroles" in town. I will lay this by for this evening, as it is getting late and after roll call. I'll wait until morning, and, may be, I will get your letter, for we had no mail to-day.

Good morning.—Well, I received your letter as predicted, and I do tell you I was glad to hear from you. Little do you know what a thrill of joy a soldier feels at receiving and reading a letter from home. How joyfully he eats his "cast-iron" biscuit, and masticates his pork, when he has read his letter and found, to his heart's content, that the dear ones at home are all well.

I am of your opinion. I think we have done our best fighting, and our share. They ought to let us go now. But, I guess, we will have to see the matter through. I have been in thirteen battles, but have come out safe—save a slight touch at Antietam, and three hits at this last one. I sometimes think I may yet get home alive, and hope I may, for I am not tired of living yet—even in these warlike days. I gave you all the news of the late battle in my previous letter.

I shall not enter into a political discussion, for no good can come of it. But, I do think that the democrats brought on this war, and now both parties are to blame for the continuance of it. I never was a Republican, nor have I changed any since the war—neither can I put any trust in as corrupt a party as the old Democratic party. You wonder why they have carried the late elections? Easily answered. Because they are all at home—a larger portion at least—than any other party. Look around you in your own town, and what is the result? Where are your S's, P's, Mc's, K's, H's, J's, N's, and a host of others? And how stands the ratio? Echo answers largely Breckinridgers. And what are they doing? "Crawling" and smiling at our late defeat! Ah! the Democratic party is rotten—rotten to the core. Of course, I don't say every democrat, is false to the government; but, I tell you, the Breckinridge wing are all so. Good night Mr. Politics.

Our regiment is reduced to five companies. We don't feel much like doing duty as a Regiment. Our appearance on dress parade is a slim and sad affair. I thought my time had come at Fredericksburg. Oh! that is a day long to be remembered. No pen can put it on paper. When I saw my comrades fall on all sides of me, it made me feel queer. But the next moment our feelings were changed, and we were rushing forward with the cold steel, thinking of nothing but the destruction of the enemy. But, I must close. My respects to all.

Yours truly, ***

A CLOSE CONNECTION.—A Persian merchant complaining of some unjust sentence of the lower courts, was told by the judge to go to the cadí. "But the cadí is your uncle," urged the plaintiff. "Then you may go to the grand vizier." "But his secretary is your cousin." "Then you may go to the sultan." "But his favorite sultana is your niece." "Well, then, go to the devil." "Ah! that is a closer connection," said the merchant, as he left the court in despair.

CONGRESSIONAL PROCEEDINGS.

IN THE SENATE, on January 26th, a bill was offered to organize a National Guard of about 250,000 men, to be officered and drilled so as to be prepared for service on short notice.

The bill for the better protection of overland emigrants was passed. A bill was introduced to provide for a national currency, to be secured by the pledge of United States stocks, and provide for the circulation and redemption thereof. The bill to suspend the sale of lands on the coast of South Carolina and Georgia, in and about Port Royal, was passed. A bill was offered authorizing the President to take possession of certain railway lines, appoint Superintendents, and work them, paying the stockholders 7 per cent during the time on the appraised value of the road. A bill was introduced to enlarge the canal and improve the navigation of the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers, from the Mississippi River to Lake Michigan. The resolution instructing the Committee on the Conduct of the War to inquire whether any plans of Gen. A. E. Burnside, for the movement of the army, have been interfered with by officers writing to or visiting Washington to oppose them, and whether such movement had been arrested, and if so, by what authority, was adopted. The bill abrogating treaties with the Sioux and indemnifying Minnesota for losses in the late Indian outbreak was passed. In the House, Walter Melndoe appeared as a Member from the 2d Wisconsin District, in place of Mr. Manchett, deceased. The bill to establish a branch Mint in Nevada was reported favorably; also the bill to establish an arsenal and ordnance depot on the tide water of New York Harbor. A bill authorizing the President to raise 150,000 black soldiers was offered and laid over until to-day. The House passed the Senate bill, amendatory of the judicial system, making Ohio, and Michigan the Seventh, and Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin, the Eighth Judicial Circuit. The great Finance bill was then completed in Committee and reported to the House. Some of the amendments were voted on separately, but all were adopted save that taxing the aggregate of bank deposits. The bill finally passed without a division, the vote being almost unanimous. The Post-office Appropriation bill (\$12,000,000) was adopted. The Senate resolution, legalizing the transfer of convicted criminals from the District of Columbia to the prison at Albany, was also passed. A resolution providing for the payment of bounties and pensions to the officers and men in the Western Military Department was passed, and the House adjourned, after a good day's work.

IN THE SENATE on January 27th bills were offered to fix the time of holding United States Circuit Courts, and for the better organization of the military establishment. A resolution was adopted to inquire into the expediency of authorizing the President to offer such bounty for the re-enlistment of such volunteers for one year, or a longer time; also, into the expediency of providing by law for three-month volunteers, either by enlistment or draft. The resolution to print at length the Fitz John Porter trial was lost, Senators stating that it had already been printed. The bills to remove Indians from Kansas and the Sioux from Minnesota were passed. The President sent in documents concerning the capture of British vessels sailing from one port to another, having on board articles contraband of war. The bill for the indemnification of the President and other persons for suspending the privileges of the writ of habeas corpus, and acts done in pursuance thereof, was taken up and amended so as to apply to criminal as well as civil cases. The Kentucky Senators indulged in severe condemnation of the President. Mr. Sausbery of Delaware was exceedingly eloquent, and was put in charge of the Sergeant at arms. In the House, the Senate bill providing for the pay of certain persons over 45 years of age, who entered the military service, was referred to the Military Committee. In Committee of the Whole, elaborate speeches on National affairs were made by Mr. Conway and Mr. Shellabarger—the latter in part as answer to the recent speech of Mr. Vallandigham. In the House, bills were offered authorizing the raising of negro soldiers for not more than seven years.

A CITY LASS.—Two young ladies of Albany were spending the summer in northeastern New York. During their visit they took several long rides with the daughter of their host about the country. On one of these occasions as they had been traveling some distance, and the day was warm, and as a trough of running water stood by the road side, they concluded to give their pony a drink. One of the city ladies agreed to get out and arrange matters for that purpose. The others remaining in the carriage and deeply engaged in conversation, for some time paid no attention to the proceedings of their companion. When at last, surprised at the long delay, they discovered her endeavoring to unbackle the crupper (the strap which passes around the horses tail.)

"Why what in the world are you doing that for?"

"Why, I'm unbackling this strap to let down the horse's head so that he can drink."

"Why is a mone like a load of hay? Because the cat'll eat it."